

## Home Circle.

### THE SHIELD OF FAITH.

"Mamma, I want my new name. Anna Winslow has two. Why can't I have two?"

"You shall have two, Althea, when you are ten years old."

"But I want two now," cried the child.

"Mamma knows best, darling. Do not be impatient." And Mrs. Long smoothed back the golden curls from the flushed cheek.

She intended to study the character of her little daughter and find out wherein her weakness lay, and then give her a second name that should be an inspiration and help to her in becoming strong and noble.

It seemed a long time to Althea to wait for her new name; but at last the longed-for day came. Her mother took her into her own room, shut the door, and pressed her close to her mother-heart.

An hour later, when they came out, Althea looked very grave and sweet, and there were traces of tears on her mother's face.

"But I cannot put it on; I have always been so faithless."

"You must put it on, Belle."

"It would do me no good, I tell you."

The speaker was a young girl of eighteen or twenty. She stood erect as she spoke, her tall, graceful figure outlined in the window, her hot cheek pressed against the cool pane.

"All my purposes are broken off," she exclaimed, in the language of Job. "How can I leave college now?"

"It is hard I know, dear," replied her companion, a sweet-faced girl seated at a study table; "but so long as you see that you must, buckle on your armor, and let me help you do it."

"If mamma had only listened to Uncle Charles and not invested our all in that miserable company."

"Now, Belle, you have said that over and over again. It will do no good. Just go to the president and tell her how matters stand, that you are obliged to leave with your bills unpaid, but that you will pay them all as soon as you can. Then put on the shield of faith and go out like a brave soldier to your life's battle."

"If I only had your faith and courage, Andy, I should be all right. If I could only have finished my musical course; but what good will two years' training do for me in this age of specialists?"

"It will do a great deal. Your voice is sweet and beautiful without any more

training. You must try for a clerkship and a choir position."

"You are so hopeful. Oh, why wasn't I made like you!"

Belle turned from the window and threw her arms about her friend. Althea Long bowed her patient face until her cheek rested on the head of the sobbing Belle, and the black hair mingled with the gold.

"Belle, dear, I think we were made very much alike, only I have learned my lesson first. Shall I tell you how?"

"Yes."

"Have you ever noticed this old card here on the wall under my father's picture?"

Althea pointed to a long green card with the picture of a knight in armor,—Richard the Lion-hearted,—seated upon a prancing war horse. Behind him, at left and right, companies of armed knights ride at his command. Under the picture were printed in clear, bold characters two Scripture texts:

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Eph. 6: 16;) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5: 4.)

"It is very precious to me, because my mother gave it me on my tenth birthday, when she gave me my second name. I was naturally a very timid child, and on my tenth birthday, when I was all excitement, wondering what the new name would be, she took me away by myself and talked with me about my greatest weakness. She told me very kindly that she knew how much I suffered because of fear and useless worry, and that she wanted me to become a courageous girl. She said that I was fearful because I did not trust in God. I prayed to God to keep me from evil, but I did not trust him to do what I asked him to do. She said that I must have something to put between me and the troubles I feared.

"I have nothing, mamma," I cried.

"Yes, you have; look here." And she showed me this card with the picture of the knight bearing his shield over his heart. Then she explained the use of shields, and taught me the meaning of the texts, and gave me my father's name,—Andrew,—because it means 'courageous.'"

"Oh, if we had known that we would never have called you Andy!"

"Never mind about that, Belle; I knew you girls did not know, and I love the name, so that any part of it sounds sweet. I remember that my father told me once his brothers always called him Andy."

"How grandly you have borne his name, Althea! We girls have often said

you were brave. I wish my mother had given me a second name."

"Shall I give you one?"

"Oh, yes, do."

"Then you must try very hard to live up to it. I had to."

"I will promise to try, only give me the name."

"Fidelia, faithful; and remember that 'this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'"

"And it shall overcome," Belle Bostwick solemnly resolved.

In a few days the girls parted, and the hard struggles of life began for Belle; but whenever she became faint-hearted, she thought of her new name, and the picture of the knight came up before her. She buckled on her armor and went bravely onward, repeating softly to herself: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." And it overcame.

Ten years later the girls met in a crowded railway station. The meeting was unexpected and a great surprise to both. Althea was a successful teacher in a woman's college. Belle had paid her debt, cared for her family, and won her way in the musical world by her faith and patience. Indeed, faith had overcome the world for both of these girls. May it not do as much for you and me? Their struggles, unknown to us, seem trifles, but they were long and hard. Yet faith conquered. Ours seem easy to some one else. Let us try and conquer too.

—Harriet Cecil Magee.

### SPIRITUAL SUNSHINE.

Sunshine in the lives of Christian believers is just as potent in the spiritual realm as is the sunshine that drives darkness from our world and brings that warmth which is so essential to life and growth in the vegetable kingdom. There is a winning and vivifying power in spiritual sunshine; for, as has been well said, men and women, youth and children, see the friendship of the sunny faced. All doors open to those who smile. All social circles welcome cheerfulness. A sunny face is an open sesame to hearts and homes. By its burdens are lightened, care dispelled, sorrows banished, and hope made to reign triumphant where fear and doubt and dismay held high carnival. Your own life will be sweetened, your own joys be heightened, by your perennial, heaven-lighted, sunny face. Get the glow and radiance from such nearness to the throne as God permits to his own. Bring from a holy and divine communion a face luminous with happiness, and let it glow and shine on all around.—Selected.

We learn to do by doing.—Parker.